

Codford War Graves



Lest we Forget

World War I

72925 RIFLEMAN

W. M. AICKEN

N.Z. RIFLE BRIGADE

28TH MARCH, 1919 Age 27



Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Rifleman W. M. Aicken is located in Back Row Grave Plot # 76 of Codford War Graves Cemetery (Using Map by Brian Marshall)

(CWGC Reference - Grave # 137)

William Michael Aicken was born 12th June 1891 at Aicken's, West Coast, New Zealand, the son of William & Jessie Aicken (nee Jackson). (His father had been born at Bangor, Ireland & his mother had been born in Scotland). He was a 26 year old, single, Horse-driver from Westland, West Coast, New Zealand when he enlisted on 17th October, 1917 with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. His service number was 72925 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Jessie Aicken of Aicken's Westland, West Coast, New Zealand.

William Aicken embarked with 37th Reinforcements A Company from Wellington, New Zealand on HMNZT (103) *Maunganui* on 9th May, 1918, destination Liverpool, England. He disembarked at Liverpool on 24th June, 1918.

Rifleman William Aicken was marched in to Brocton Army Camp, Staffordshire on 26th June, 1918. He was admitted to Military Hospital at Cannock Chase, Staffordshire on 9th September, 1918 with a fracture of the left fibula. In a statement made by William Aicken - *"On the 8th September I was wrestling with Wm. Bissett in "I" Lines, Hut 19, before going to bed and I tripped on a bed and fell with my ankle under me."* 2 other witness statements were taken. No action was taken on this matter that occurred off duty. He was then transferred to a Convalescent Hospital on 30th October, 1918 & discharged to report to Codford on 11th December, 1918.

Rifleman Aicken was admitted to 3rd New Zealand General Hospital on 21st March, 1919 with Measles. He was reported "Dangerously Ill" on 26th March, 1919 with Broncho pneumonia.

Rifleman William Michael Aicken died on 28th March, 1919 at the 3rd New Zealand General Hospital at Codford, Wiltshire of Broncho Pneumonia.

A death for William Aicken, aged 28, was registered in the March quarter, 1919 in the district of Warminster, Wiltshire, England.

Rifleman Aicken was buried at St. Mary's Cemetery, Codford on 31st March, 1919.

Rifleman William Michael Aicken did not desire to make a Will – as noted in his Service Record File.

Rifleman William Michael Aicken, 72925 was last attached to 3rd New Zealand Rifle Brigade (Reserve).

Rifleman William Michael Aicken was entitled to British War Medal only as he had not entered a Theatre of War. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Rifleman Aicken's father – Mr William Aicken at Aicken's Post Office, Westlands. (May, 1921 & January, 1922)

(25 pages of Rifleman William Michael Aicken's Service records are available for On Line viewing at Archives New Zealand website).

Information obtained from the Archives New Zealand, Auckland War Memorial Museum, Commonwealth War Graves Commission & PapersPast, National Library of New Zealand.

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Newspaper Reports

SICK AND WOUNDED

Canterbury District

Dangerously Ill

Aicken, W. 72925, Aickens

(*Evening Post*, Volume XCVII, Issue 81, 7th April, 1919 & *Dominion*, 8th April, 1919)

ROLL OF HONOUR

NEW ZEALAND CASUALTIES

A casualty list issued last night reported:-

Canterbury District

DIED OF SICKNESS

Aicken, W., 7295 R.B. (Mrs J Aickin, West Coast, m), 28th March

(*Evening Post*, Volume XCVII, Issue 83, 9th April, 1919)

Rifleman W. M. Aicken has a Commonwealth War Graves Headstone. None of the New Zealand CWGC headstones at Codford have a personal inscription.

Photo of Rifleman W. M. Aicken's Headstone at Codford War Graves Cemetery (below)



(Photo courtesy of Romy Wyeth)